

Acupuncture may aid cancer therapy

Danny Rose
April 7, 2010

AAP

Australian researchers will investigate whether women undergoing treatment for breast cancer can benefit from acupuncture.

Trials overseas have shown the ancient Chinese therapy can help to combat the fatigue caused by conventional cancer treatments, says Associate Professor Caroline Smith.

Australian recruits are now sought for a pilot study looking for further evidence that acupuncture can reduce the often long-term side-effects of chemotherapy.

"Treating cancer-related fatigue usually includes ruling out causes such as anaemia, but often no specific cause or adequate treatment is found," said Dr Smith from the University of Western Sydney's Complementary Medicine Research Centre (CompleMED).

"Acupuncture has shown promise for treating cancer-related fatigue in small-scale trials ... and this pilot trial, if successful, will help lay the foundation for a future large-scale clinical trial."

Dr Smith said almost all those undergoing cancer treatment would report some drop-off in their energy levels and for up to 40 per cent this fatigue would continue for "many years after their cancer treatment has concluded".

Women aged 18 to 70 who are being treated for breast cancer and experiencing fatigue are invited to take part in the six-week Sydney-based trial.

Some will receive acupuncture - the insertion of very fine needles into specific points on the body - while others will receive a non-reactive placebo treatment.

The third group, the control, will receive no treatment at all, though at the end of the study they can opt for an acupuncture treatment.

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Teachers name: Kate Russell

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Section A: Multiple choice

1. Professor Caroline Smith said overseas trials have shown that acupuncture
 - a) can fight tiredness caused by cancer treatment.
 - b) is an ancient Chinese therapy.
 - c) causes fatigue when used with conventional cancer treatments.

2. Dr Smith says cancer-related fatigue
 - a) is usually caused by anaemia.
 - b) has adequate treatment options.
 - c) doesn't always have an obvious reason.

3. Dr Smith believes that a large scale clinical trial
 - a) has shown promising results.
 - b) is likely if the pilot trial is successful.
 - c) doesn't always have an obvious reason.

4. Almost all patients having cancer treatment
 - a) said their energy levels decreased.
 - b) had a 40 per cent reduction in energy levels.
 - c) had fatigue for many years after their cancer treatment.

5. In the six week, Sydney based trial,
 - a) 18 to 70 women have been invited to take part.
 - b) a control group can choose to have acupuncture when the study is over.
 - c) all patients will receive treatment.

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Qld backs teen cosmetic surgery rules

December 23, 2007

Queensland is a step closer to becoming the first Australian state to regulate cosmetic surgery among teenagers after overwhelming public support for the move.

In October Premier Anna Bligh released a discussion paper on the subject, due to anecdotal evidence suggesting cosmetic procedures such as nose jobs and breast enhancements were widely sought and received among teens.

The majority of the 290 public submissions received since the paper's release are in favour of regulating cosmetic surgery, as well as the use of solariums by teenagers, Ms Bligh said on Sunday.

"Ninety-five per cent called for more regulation of cosmetic surgery by people under 18 years and 96 per cent supported restrictions on minors using solariums," she said in a statement.

"The overwhelming community support is generally in line with the views of key stakeholders such as surgeons and the Cancer Council, who have been individually consulted."

Health Minister Stephen Robertson said he would present regulatory options for cosmetic surgery and solarium use to cabinet next year.

"We don't want to become a nanny state, but anecdotal evidence of huge increases in breast implants, nose jobs and tummy tucks amongst teenagers is alarming," Mr Robertson said.

"I'm not against these procedures to correct deformities or negate any medical or psychological impact caused by specific body features, but major surgery for purely cosmetic reasons for youngsters must be questioned."

No Australian state or territory directly regulates the provision of cosmetic surgery to minors.

Victoria recently passed laws making it illegal for anyone under the age of 16 to use a solarium, and that 16- and 17-year-olds only be able to use a solarium with parental consent.

A meeting of Australian health ministers next year will consider the development of nationally consistent regulation of solariums.

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Section B: Short Answer

Use 8 words or less

6. What are most of the public submissions received since the paper's release in favour of?

7. According to Stephen Robertson, what is one example of a procedure that has increased in teenagers?

8. How does the Health Minister feel about the rise in cosmetic surgery in teenagers?

9. How does the Health Minister feel about surgery that corrects deformities?

10. What do Victorian teenagers aged 16 - 17 need permission from their parents for?

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Answers

Section A: Multiple choice

1. Professor Caroline Smith said overseas trials have shown that acupuncture
 - a) can fight tiredness caused by cancer treatment.
2. Dr Smith says cancer-related fatigue
 - c) doesn't always have an obvious reason.
3. Dr Smith believes that a large scale clinical trial
 - b) is likely if the pilot trial is successful.
4. Almost all patients having cancer treatment
 - a) said their energy levels decreased.
5. In the six week, Sydney based trial,
 - b) a control group can choose to have acupuncture when the study is over.

Section B: Short Answer

6. What are most of the public submissions received since the paper's release in favour of?

Regulating cosmetic surgery and solarium use in teenagers

7. According to Stephen Robertson, what is one example of a procedure that has increased in teenagers?

ONE of the following: breast implants / nose jobs / tummy tucks

8. How does the Health Minister feel about the rise in cosmetic surgery in teenagers?

Alarmed

9. How does the Health Minister feel about surgery that corrects deformities?

He is not against it / he supports it

10. What do Victorian teenagers aged 16 - 17 need permission from their parents for?

To use a solarium

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